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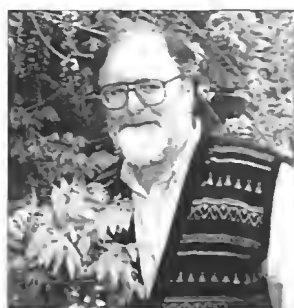
#### FRONT COVER

*Winter Banksia* by  
Criss Canning (see page 21)  
Oil on Belgian linen 22"x22"



## GUEST EDITORIAL

by Peter Cuffley



*Acacia pubescens* threatened by the need for more burial space at Rookwood. This reminds us that old cemeteries and burial grounds can be important sites for both exotic and indigenous vegetation. At Fryerstown in the Central Victorian goldfields, the trunks of eucalypts echo the varying hues of the headstones in the beautifully situated cemetery. A few pines and cypresses join with the Cherry Ballart, *Exocarpus cupressiformis* to strike darker chords. Seasonal accents come from wattles, garden bulbs, wildflowers and a nearby elm thicket. White, picketed entrance gates are flanked by old rosemary bushes, a traditional symbol of remembrance. Apart from neglect and normal weathering, the only threat to the historic graves are some of the young seedling eucalypts which are growing right alongside stonework and iron railings. This is an example of the need for thoughtful management to protect individual graves and maintain the essential character of this historic place.

At nearby Vaughan, the old cemetery is bounded by forest on three sides with many eucalypts established on the site itself. There are no exotic trees, though it has some old garden flowers including a clump of *Gladiolus x colvillei*. Castlemaine cemetery at Campbells Creek is part of a broader cultural landscape and retains a significant collection of trees including a weeping cypress, deodar cedars, oaks, a pencil cypress and a number of eucalypt species. This cemetery has suffered from unsympathetic works in past eras and apparently faced a plan to bulldoze historic graves and dump the headstones at the tip. All thinking people shudder at such acts of vandalism and yet well-meaning 'improvement' schemes or outright commercialism can still degrade or even destroy irreplaceable elements in historic places. One of the dangers for cemeteries is the kind of 'clean-up' that takes place without informed evaluation, and wider community input. Gardeners who appreciate 'heritage' roses know that in some old cemeteries only extreme resilience has saved a few of the specimens planted by earlier generations. Poisoning, slashing and burning have ensured a bleak picture in many pioneer burial grounds. Maintenance is important to ensure safe access including the care of paths, roads, gutters and drains. The need to protect plantings and buildings along with all of the other structures or elements should be self evident. 'Friends' groups can help increase public awareness as well as offering expertise in conservation. State, national and international organisations can be a powerful influence at every level.

Our cemeteries are rich in genealogy, social history, aesthetic ideals, popular symbolism, garden history and landscape significance. Their well-being can be a rallying point for a widening awareness of the importance of both natural and cultural landscapes.

*Peter Cuffley*

Peter Cuffley is known for his books on traditional gardens, household life, family history, domestic architecture and other social history subjects. In 1972 he was appointed the first Curator of History at Sovereign Hill, Ballarat. Since 1976 he has lived in the Castlemaine area. With his wife Barbara, two dogs and a cat, he now resides in an 1864 cottage within sight of historic Buda. He is currently leading local efforts to save cultural landscapes in the Mt Alexander Shire.

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IN MEMORY OF

# Baron von Mueller

by Ken Duxbury



BARON SIR FERDINAND VON MUELLER died at his home in South Yarra on October 10 1896 after a brief illness, aged 71.

He was buried in St Kilda Cemetery and the funeral procession, including many of Victoria's most eminent scientists and citizens, travelled the six kilometres from the Baron's house in South Yarra to the cemetery, led by the Turn Verein orchestra. The executors of von Mueller's will called for a gravestone memorial. After a protracted fundraising campaign, the memorial was finally unveiled by the Governor-General on November 26, 1901.

The stone is a large and imposing granite obelisk, topped by an urn. It includes an inset bust of von Mueller and a long and apposite inscription:

Dedicated by Co-workers in the Field of Science

*To the Memory of  
Baron Sir Ferdinand von Mueller, K.C.M.G.,  
M.D., F.R.S. & ETC.*

*Born in Rostock, Germany, June 30, 1825.  
Government Botanist of Victoria from 1852  
Until his death, Oct. 10, 1896;*

*Director Melb. Bot. Gardens 1857 – 1873  
Whose erudite works on the flora of Australia  
have secured him*

*Immortal fame amongst the renowned systemic  
phytologists of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.*

The inscription concluded with a quote from Schiller, the Baron's favourite poet, in the original German, and with an English translation:

*Despair not: there are still noble hearts  
that glow for the august and sublime*

I recently visited St Kilda Cemetery, entering by the Dandenong Road gates, looking for a tall granite obelisk topped by an urn. There were quite a number of monuments fitting this general description until, in the south-western corner of the cemetery, I came across the correct

monument which was unmistakable even from some distance: it is one of the largest monuments in the cemetery, with the lengthy inscription freshly gilded glistening brightly in the winter sun, and the bas-relief effigy of von Mueller providing further confirmation that I had indeed arrived at my destination.

There is a small garden bed at the base of the monument, fenced in by iron railings. It is planted with several small *Leptospermum juniperinum horizontalis* (a cultivar) – one was half alive, whereas the others were quite dead. A recent visitor had placed a sprig of banksias at the base of the grave. No doubt the Baron would have been able to allocate the tribute to its correct species.

While contemplating the scene, it occurred to me that the little garden bed could be put to better use; for example by planting specimens of one of the many plants which von Mueller discovered and/or first described. One obvious choice would be the delightful Royal Grevillea, *Grevillea victoriae*, which von Mueller discovered high up in the hitherto unexplored Buffalo Mountains in 1853, whilst on a major exploratory expedition on packhorse shortly after his appointment as Government Botanist.

Unfortunately the general surroundings of the grave have a rather bleak, desolate and barren appearance possibly due to the use of herbicide as a regular maintenance tool. It might be possible to re-establish some native grasses such as *Dianella longifolia* and *Wahlenbergia* spp. on bare-earth gravetops and similar areas. A re-introduction of indigenous vegetation is now being carried out in Melbourne's outer suburban Eltham Cemetery, and it is unfortunate that (unlike many Melbourne and Australian cemeteries) St Kilda Cemetery retains virtually no remnant local vegetation.

Von Mueller's grave at St Kilda Cemetery, showing lengthy inscription. This must be one of the relatively rare occurrences of the word 'phytologists' on such an inscription.

\* A Latin word for botanists.

## The Mueller Medal

Early in 1897 a public meeting was held in the Melbourne Town Hall with the idea of establishing 'a permanent memorial in the shape of a statue or scholarship which should keep his memory green always'. A Memorial Fund Committee was established and when £450 was in hand this was used for the award of a medal every second year 'to the author of the most important contribution, or series of contributions to natural knowledge; published originally within His Majesty's Dominions...preference to be given to work referring to Australia.'

This medal has been awarded to such figures as Edgeworth David (1909), J. J. Maiden (1923) and Douglas Mawson (1930). The Mueller medal is an appropriate way to remember von Mueller who was not only a great contributor to natural knowledge but also a great accumulator and displayer of medals, decorations and honours: during his life he received 184 civil and scientific honours from all over the world. Unfortunately the medals were dispersed after his death – if gathered together they would make an impressive display.

## Other Memorials

In the course of his long, illustrious and remarkably industrious career, von Mueller created a vast and remarkably diverse legacy to himself. For example:

- His extensive botanical explorations throughout Victoria, leading to the discovery of new plant species, many which are now widely cultivated.
- The description and naming of about 2000 new plant species
- A vast output of scientific and educational books, articles and correspondence on botanical matters
- The introduction of many new plants to Australia including *Pinus radiata*, marrum grass and, most notoriously, the blackberry
- A key role in the development of the National Herbarium of Victoria - along with its collections and library
- An important role in the early (pre Guilfoyle) development of the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens and its plant collections. Von Mueller was responsible for many of the tree and shrub plantings which were later re-arranged to such great visual effect by William Guilfoyle
- A key role in the establishment and planting of Victoria's unique array of regional botanic gardens and especially their coniferous plantings.



- A large number of plant species have been named after von Mueller and also one genus of plants, the *Muellerina*

Von Mueller's grave at St Kilda Cemetery

It is often forgotten that von Mueller was one of Victoria's (and Australia's) earliest conservationists who believed that forests had ecological, aesthetic and spiritual values as well as economic utility. 'For forests, beyond offering us their utilitarian wealth, have to perform vast physiologic functions in the great economy of nature. On a feeling and sensitive mind a demolished forest impresses unmingled sadness, whereas its primeval grandeur must inspire anyone with unmeasurable delight...Let us regard the forests as a gift, entrusted to any of us only for transient care to be surrendered to posterity as an unimpaired property increased in richness and augmented in blessings, to pass as a sacred patrimony from generation to generation'.

In order to celebrate the life and honour the memory of Baron von Mueller, I believe it is necessary to do much more than just ensure that his grave is kept in good repair, and the inscription kept freshly gilded. It is important to continue – and to extend – his investigation into Australia's unique flora. This is a never-ending task, and important, even spectacular, discoveries are still being made, most notably the Wollemi Pine. There is also a need to learn from his mistakes – by introducing more rigorous and stringent controls on the introduction of potential environmental weeds. For example the introduction of ornamental exotic grapes which have the potential to become, if not the next blackberry, then certainly the next serrated tussock. And finally, there is the need to treat our forests and other native vegetation as a sacred patrimony to be handed on to future generations, rather than as a 'resource' to be exploited for short term gain.

## REFERENCES

Kynaston, Edward *A Man on Edge: a life of Baron Sir Ferdinand von Mueller* Penguin Books, Ringwood, Victoria 1981

Willis, Margaret *By their Fruits: a Life of Ferdinand von Mueller Botanist and Explorer* Angus and Robertson, Sydney 1944

Ken Duxbury's two major interests are Victoria's historic public gardens and the protection, management and enhancement of Melbourne's remaining natural areas. He has been involved with designing urban and rural gardens which make use of locally indigenous and exotic plants which respond to the cultural heritage and personal tastes of the owners, and to the natural character of the site and its environs.

# THE *Necropolis* at R O O K W O O D

IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE COLONY of New South Wales, the mortality rate was high, and very little ceremony was granted to death. Life was harsh, and cultural traditions were not given as much importance as in Britain.

by **Matthew Devine**

#### FOOTNOTES:

<sup>1</sup> *In Memoriam - Cemeteries and Tombstone Art in New South Wales*, Historic Houses Trust of N.S.W., Travelling Exhibition, August 1981, exhibition catalogue, p5.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Mackay, 'Architectural styles and funerary symbolism', in David A. Weston, *The Sleeping City - The Story of Rookwood Necropolis*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1989, p30. *The Sleeping City* gives a detailed description of the development of Rookwood, its notable inhabitants and the role of the Society of Australian Genealogists in transcribing the cemetery 1980-1989.

<sup>3</sup> James Semple Kerr, 'Cemeteries - their value and conservation', Australian Council Of National Trusts, *Australia in Trust*, Collins & Australian Council of National Trusts, Sydney, 1985, p82.

Rookwood 1875,  
*The Illustrated Sydney News*  
May 1875, page 4

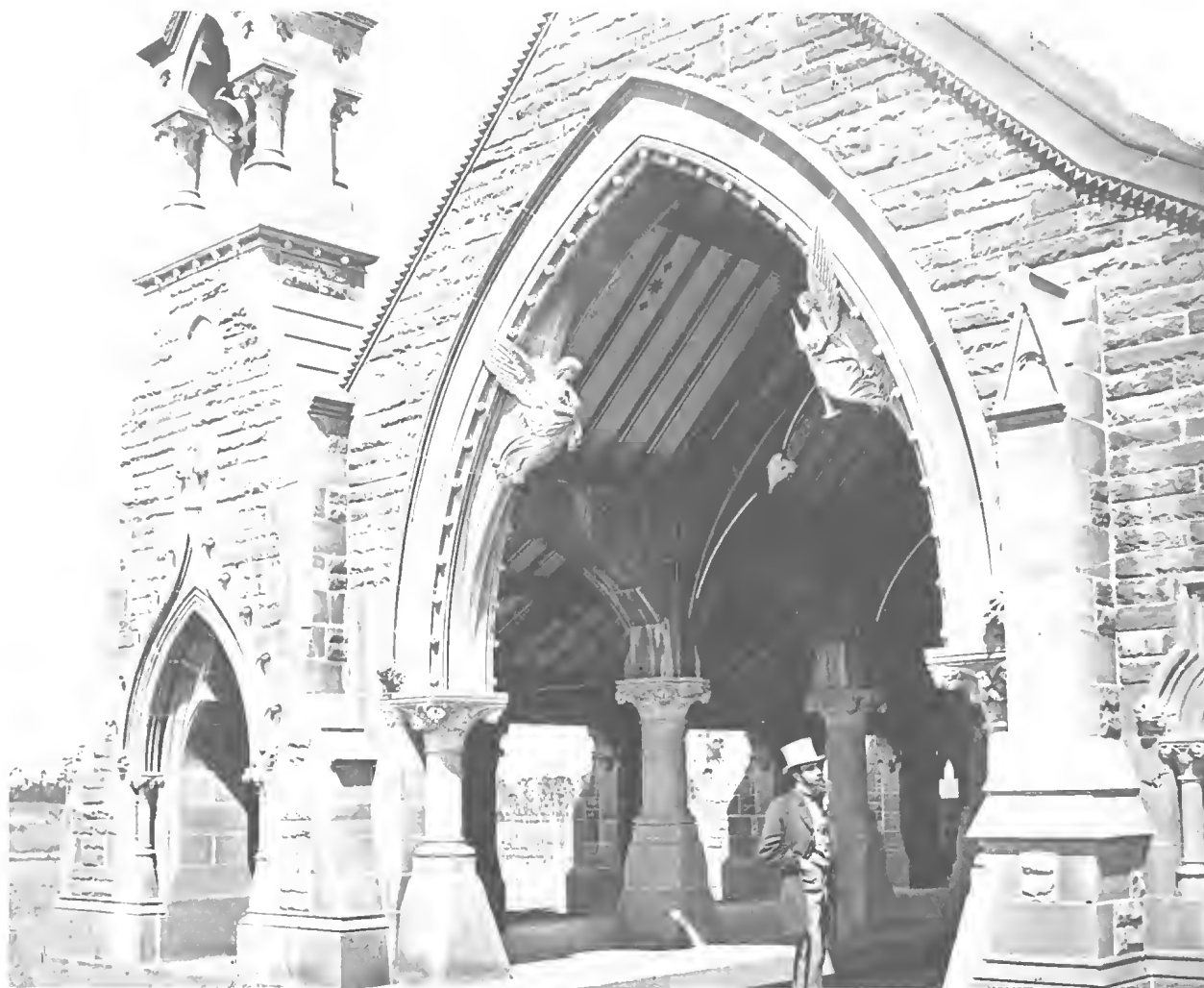
However, after the increase in population due to the gold rushes, prosperity and society changed its attitudes towards burial. 'Dying became an important part of social mores and the cemetery suddenly assumed a new importance.'<sup>1</sup> The attitudes towards death and burial that were now so much a part of Victorian culture in Britain were emigrating to the colony on a grand scale. Mary Mackay notes that 'a romantic attitude towards death and dying developed in Victorian Britain in the first half of the 19th century and was transposed, little changed, to the Colony of New South Wales.'<sup>2</sup>

James Semple Kerr in his article *Cemeteries - their value and conservation* describes the evolution of cemetery planning in Australia. Early cemeteries tended to be roughly laid out in rows, sometimes with an easterly position, and located on the edges of settlement. By the mid nineteenth century, the layout was more rigid, usually with a central avenue, sometimes lined with trees, and parallel perpendicular paths crossing this, dividing the ground into denominations. This cemetery tended to be based on a rectilinear grid. The latter half of the nineteenth century saw the development of the grand metropolitan necropolis, generally again on the edges of the city. These were usually laid out with elaborate serpentine paths and a rectilinear plot grid laid over the top. The twentieth century saw the development of the lawn cemetery, where headstones are replaced by small plaques set in an easily maintained area of grass.



In Europe, an important change in the attitudes towards death and burial occurred in the early to mid 1800s. These changes in attitude resulted in reformatory measures against the existing state of cemeteries in France, such as the





establishment of Père-Lachaise, on Mont-Louis, overlooking Paris in 1804. This cemetery did not have an urban nature like its predecessors, but was much more like a garden, with plants, winding paths, and glorious views. This cemetery was the major influence for developments soon after in Britain and the United States of America and subsequently in Australia.

The garden cemetery as developed in Britain in the nineteenth century is very similar to the rural cemetery which developed at the same time in America. Both claimed Père-Lachaise as their influence. Both tended to have romantic layouts, with picturesque vistas, winding serpentine paths, dark foliage, and elaborate monuments. Many were built on hillsides, complete with forests, lakes, and chapels. The garden cemetery as a notion was transplanted here from Britain in the 1840s, with additional influence coming from America. In 1867, the Necropolis at Rookwood was established as a garden cemetery, based on examples in America and Britain, and more than likely influenced by John Claudius Loudon, eminent British landscape and agricultural writer and taste-maker.

Rookwood was established in an era when the design of cemeteries was granted a great deal of

importance. A cemetery reflects the ideas of its designers, the attitudes of the culture that creates it, and of the society that uses it. The Necropolis at Rookwood is a product of the Victorian era with its intricate rituals and attitudes towards death.

Following a series of cemetery closures in central Sydney, it was decided that a new general cemetery should be developed between the growing centres of Sydney and Parramatta. The Secretary for Lands, John Robertson advertised in the *Government Gazette* on September 28, 1860 in search of land for this new cemetery, seeking at least 100 acres of land, on or near the Great Southern Railway, between Sydney and Parramatta, with soil of a considerable depth, free from stones and good drainage to either salt water or to a water supply not for domestic purposes.<sup>4</sup> Other requirements included isolation from settled areas to prevent the devaluation of adjoining land and the capacity to be 'cultured and beautified, as is frequently the case with cemeteries in other countries.'<sup>5</sup>

An individual with the name of A. Cohen offered 'for sale to the Government a block of land at Liberty Plains, for the purposes of a General Cemetery,'<sup>6</sup> believing that his land was suitable for the new cemetery, being about

Cemetery Station number 1  
northern end, Rookwood,  
1871

Courtesy Government  
Printing Office, State Library  
of New South Wales

#### FOOTNOTES:

<sup>4</sup> *New South Wales Government Gazette*, No.182, September 28, 1860.

<sup>5</sup> *The Cumberland Mercury*, April 29, 1876., David A. Weston, (ed.), op.cit., p9.

<sup>6</sup> A. Cohen, letter to Secretary for Lands, August 6, 1861, Letter No.199, Legislative Assembly of N.S.W., op.cit., p98.

<sup>7</sup> A. Cohen, letter to Colonial Secretary, July 6, 1861, Letter No.191, & A. Cohen, letter to Secretary for Lands, August 6, 1861, Letter No.199, Legislative Assembly of N.S.W., op.cit., p96-8.

# FOOTNOTES:

<sup>8</sup> It is also probable that a plant exchange programme between the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Necropolis was instigated by Moore, and continued through into the directorship of J.H.Maiden.

<sup>9</sup> *In Memoriam - Cemeteries and Tombstone Art in New South Wales*, op.cit.,

<sup>10</sup> *The Cumberland Mercury*, April 29, 1876., David A. Weston, (ed.), op.cit., p9.

<sup>11</sup> *Sydney Morning Herald*, November 16, 1875., quoted in Joan Sigrist, 'A walk through history', in David A. Weston, (ed.), op.cit., p15.

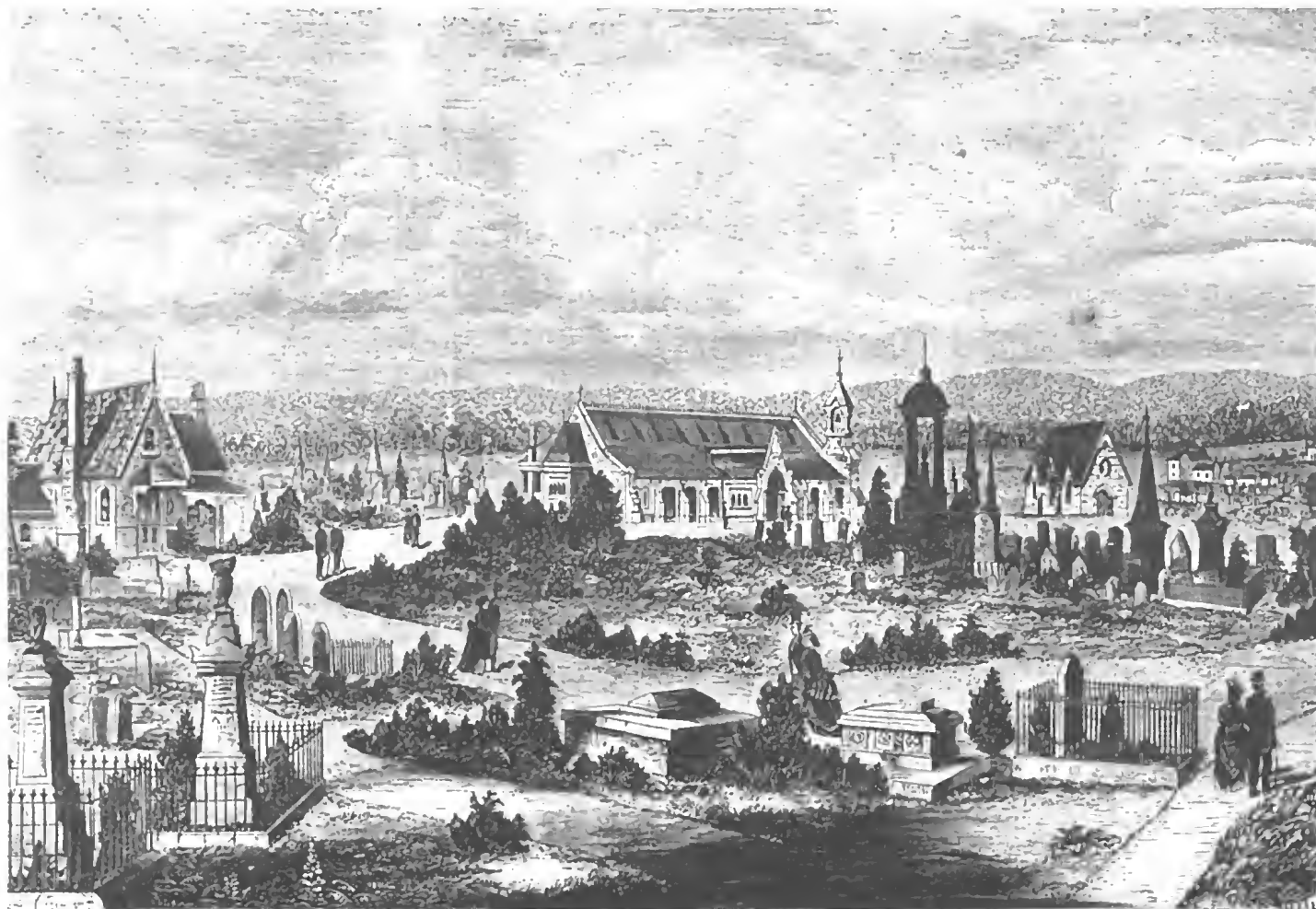
<sup>12</sup> Loudon had numerous ideas and opinions regarding places and customs of death, which he had no hesitation in expressing, initially through his *Gardener's Magazine*, later compiled in 1843 into one volume: *On the Laying out, Planting, and Managing of Cemeteries, and on the Improvement of Churchyards*. In this book, Loudon discusses the state of country churchyards, suburban cemeteries, suitable trees, proper drainage, costs and capacities, styles of chapel architecture and cremation.

11 miles from Sydney, on the railway line, with easy access from major roads, as well as meeting other requirements. The Government agreed to purchase eighty hectares (200 acres) at a price of ten pounds an acre, and the transfer of title was finalised in April 1862. Immediately, Charles Moore, the Director of the Botanic Gardens in Sydney, supervised the initial fencing of the land at Haslem's Creek. It is indicated by correspondence that he was probably involved in the designing and landscaping of the site at Haslem's Creek.<sup>8</sup> The Church of England section has 'a more Italianate garden plan, attributed . . . to Simeon Henry Pearce of Randwick.'<sup>9</sup>

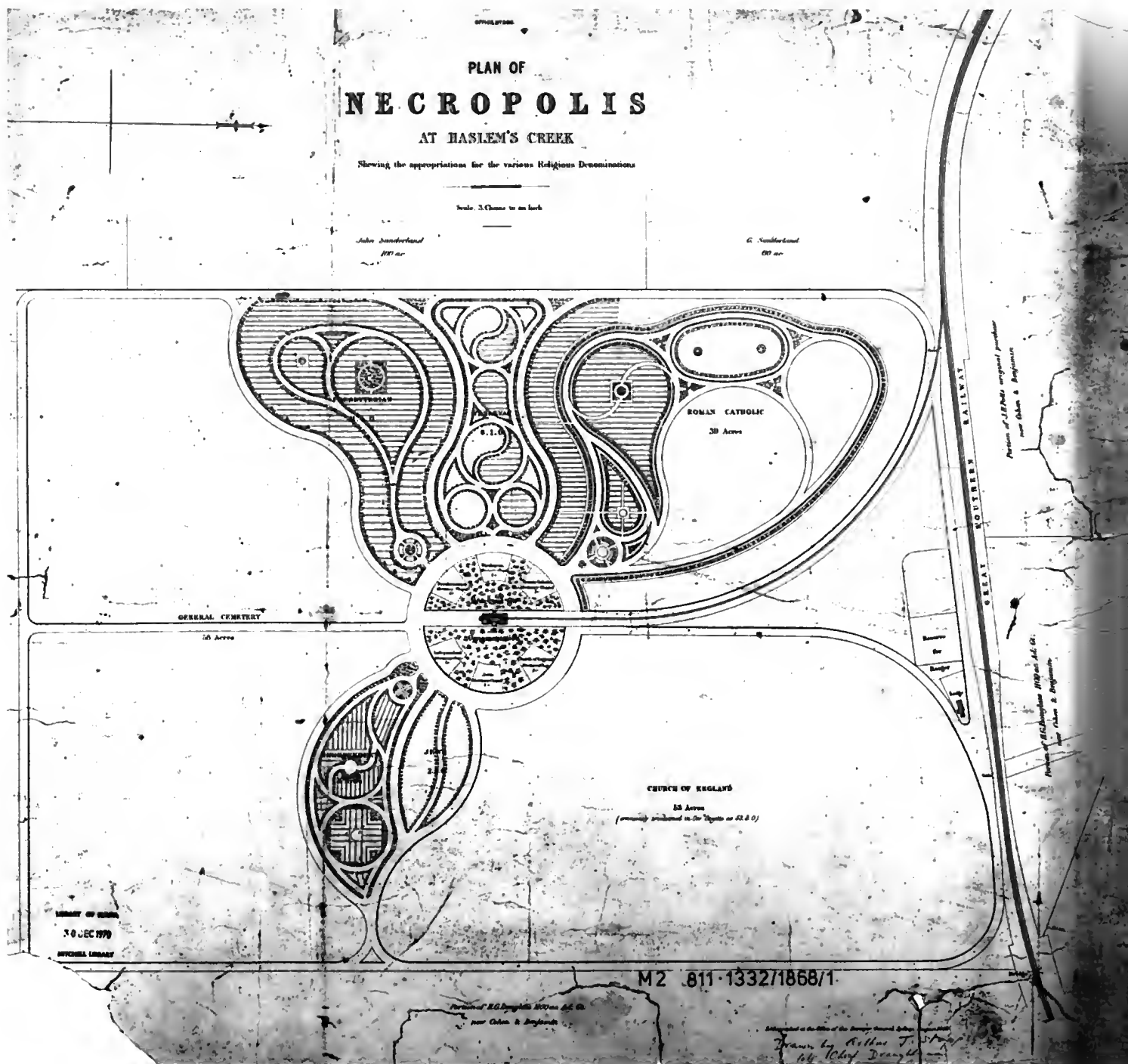
The first burial at Rookwood was recorded in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on January 5, 1867, being that of John Whalan, aged 18 (although no record in official documents mentions his interment). The first registered burial occurred two days later, that of a 14 month old baby, Catherine McMullen, interred in the Roman Catholic Section.

Elaborate planning and planting were carried out over the years in an effort to make it 'cultured and beautified'.<sup>10</sup> The areas reputedly designed by Charles Moore had a picturesque plan, with curvilinear paths and winding circles,

reflecting the cemeteries of Père-Lachaise, and the garden and rural cemeteries. The Anglican section designed by Pearce had a serpentine brick canal, punctuated by fountains and ponds, surrounded by gardens, winding paths and shade houses for resting. It is known that Pearce had visited America, and was greatly impressed by the cemeteries that he visited there, bringing back *Magnolia grandiflora* seeds, later planted in avenues. By 1875, Haslem's Creek Cemetery was described in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, as having grounds that were 'tastefully laid out with shrubs and parterres, divided by neatly kept paths.'<sup>11</sup> Other features include the use of planting to edge roads, the use of a system of double rows of graves with paths between and the use of evergreen trees such as cypresses (*Cupressus sempervivens*), pines (*Araucaria heterophylla*, *A. bidwillii*, *Pinus pinea*) and palms (*Phoenix canariensis*, *Livistona* sp.), probably influenced by John Claudius Loudon's *On the Laying out, Planting, and Managing of Cemeteries, and on the Improvement of Churchyards*.<sup>12</sup> Though Rookwood was obviously influenced by the writings of Loudon evidenced by its clear divisions, plot layout, planting and the like, it seems to be more like a 'pleasure garden' than he







'The *main object* of a burial-ground is, the disposal of the remains of the dead, in such a manner as that their decomposition, and return to the earth from which they sprung, shall not prove injurious to the living; either by affecting their health, or shocking their feelings, opinions, or prejudices. A *secondary object* is, or ought to be, the improvement of the moral sentiments and general taste of all classes, and more especially of the great masses of society'.

John Claudius Loudon, *On the Laying Out, Planting, and Managing Of Cemeteries, and on the Improvement of Churchyards*, 1843, p.1.

above: Plan of Necropolis at Haslem's Creek, 1868, indicating areas designated for certain religious denominations, paths and gardens.

Courtesy Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

far left: By 1875, the grounds were laid out with parterres, gardens and paths.

*The Illustrated Sydney News* May 1875, page 4

Headstone of Charles Moore,  
Director, Royal Botanic  
Gardens 1848-86, Church of  
England section.  
Photo: M. Devine

#### FOOTNOTES:

<sup>13</sup>N.S.W. Government Gazette,  
February 5, 1867.  
<sup>14</sup>ibid.

<sup>15</sup>This novel was originally  
published as a romance in  
1834, and numerous editions  
were published and made  
their way to the colony.  
A particularly cheap edition  
was brought out in the 1850s.  
David Scott Mitchell, who  
established the Mitchell  
Library had an 1836 edition,  
that with an 1890s E.W.Cole  
edition, are part of the  
Mitchell collection. The 1836  
edition sets the whole  
romantic, gothic tone,  
beginning with: "Within the  
gloomy precincts of a vault -  
by the light of a candle stuck  
in a rusty sconce against its  
walls -and at midnight's  
witching hour -might be  
discovered two figures seated  
on an old oaken coffin-lid, and  
wrapped in silence as  
profound as that of the dead  
around them." William  
Harrison Ainsworth,  
*Rookwood: a romance*,  
4th edition, Macrone,  
London, 1836.  
<sup>16</sup>C.C.Singleton,  
'The Rookwood Cemetery  
Line', in David A. Weston,  
(ed.), op.cit., p51.

<sup>17</sup>In *Memoriam - Cemeteries  
and Tombstone Art in New  
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Exhibition, August 1981,  
exhibition catalogue., p10.

**Matthew Devine** studied  
architecture and heritage  
conservation at the University  
of Sydney. As part of his  
Architecture degree, he  
completed a dissertation  
entitled *The Garden of  
Mourning: The Necropolis at  
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Loudon, and the Garden  
Cemetery Movement. He is  
currently employed as Public  
Affairs Coordinator at the  
Royal Australian Institute of  
Architects (NSW Chapter)  
and is chair of the National  
Trust of Australia (NSW)  
Parks & Gardens Conservation  
Committee.



would have approved. Rookwood is a good  
example of a garden cemetery, but not as Loudon  
wanted garden cemeteries to be: educational,  
ordered and solemn, and definitely not romantic.

In the initial planning, each religious  
denomination was allocated an area, supposedly  
according to their population in the colony.  
Subsequent extensions to the cemetery have  
increased its area to 314 hectares (777 acres).

The General Cemetery at Haslem's Creek was  
officially named 'The Necropolis' from early  
1867.<sup>13</sup> Many years of concern from  
neighbouring residents caused several name  
changes, and by 1878, it was known as  
The Necropolis at Rookwood. It was claimed  
that Rookwood was a pleasant and appropriate  
name, because of the many crows in the area,  
crows resembling rooks.<sup>14</sup> Others claim that the  
name was from the name of a gothic novel by  
William Harrison Ainsworth, titled *Rookwood*.<sup>15</sup>

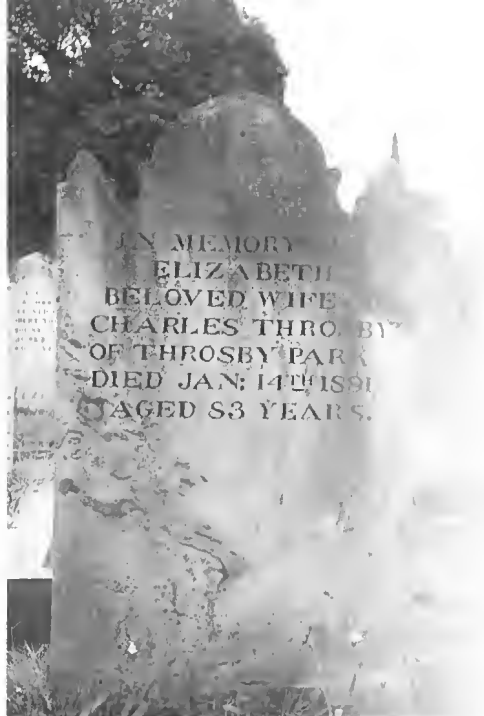
By 1864, it was decided that a railway station  
should be provided for the new cemetery, as a  
means of providing transport for mourners,  
clergy and the deceased. A regular service of  
funeral trains began from April 1867.  
Two receiving houses were built and completed  
in 1869, one in the Sydney yards and the other  
at the terminus at the cemetery, both designed  
by the Colonial Architect, James Barnet.  
The function of a mortuary station was  
unprecedented and modern, and Barnet  
accommodated this very well with his  
appropriate and beautiful Gothic structures,  
built in Pyrmont sandstone, and decorated with  
angels and cherubs.

As the cemetery expanded, so too did the railway  
line within it, and by 1908, there were four stations

located within the cemetery. The funeral train was  
generally composed of a six-car set of  
uncomfortable carriages that travelled at a slow  
crawl, preparing 'to stop on the exhibition of a red  
flag at any suburban station to pick up "corpses,  
mourners or clergymen"'.<sup>16</sup> The advent of road  
motor funerals and the use of buses or private  
motor cars for visitors, saw the rail traffic  
decreasing to such an extent, that the service  
was restricted to Saturdays and Sundays only.  
On April 3, 1948 trains were finally withdrawn  
and the branch line was permanently closed, and  
subsequently removed. The main receiving station  
was purchased for use as a church in Ainslie,  
Canberra (consecrated in 1975), while the Regent  
street station has been used at times as a brewery  
depot, a parcel depot and a restaurant.

Rookwood developed a reputation as a scenic  
spot, as a place of recreation on the outer  
metropolitan area. Particularly in the last two  
decades of the nineteenth century, 'on weekends  
the trains were crowded, many passengers visiting  
the cemetery to admire and enjoy the beauties of  
the landscape and its atmosphere of tranquility'.<sup>17</sup>

Rookwood still shows evidence of its elaborate  
layout and plantings, the finest examples in the  
oldest part of the cemetery. While Rookwood,  
like its predecessors in Europe and America,  
served as a location for disposal of the dead,  
it was designed to recreate Elysium, the home  
of the blessed after death, as a place of nature  
for communion with the dead, or even  
Arcadia. The Victorian celebration of death,  
the influence of John Claudius Loudon and  
other garden cemeteries, and the patina of age,  
all work together to create this glorious garden  
of mourning.



# BONG BONG

by Sally Darling

SETTLEMENT OF AUSTRALIA by white man began with the arrival in 1788 of the First Fleet into what later became known as Sydney Harbour. After the first years the population spread west to Parramatta looking for land for their cattle and crops, then west over the Blue Mountains in 1813 and to the South.

As early as 1798 Governor Hunter sent a party exploring south from Parramatta, it reached a point at the junction of the Wingecarribee and Wollondilly Rivers, then turning south east it came upon good open land. It is presumed this was the Bong Bong area which today lies along the bend of the Wingecarribee River to the north of Moss Vale. In 1821 Governor Macquarie designated the first town in the Southern Highlands and named it Bong Bong. Being prone to flooding it was later abandoned and has silted over but it remains an undisturbed site of a convict period settlement.

Charles Throsby (1777-1828), who arrived in the colony in 1802, received a land grant between Camden and Liverpool. From there he explored south to the Marulan area, Kangaroo Valley and the Illawarra. For his exploration achievements Governor Macquarie rewarded him with a land grant of his own choosing. He chose 400 hectares (1000 acres) in the Bong Bong area where he had a hut on the riverbank in Bong Bong village. Charles died childless and his nephew also Charles, inherited his estate.

It is from nephew Charles that the Throsby family is descended.

Charles Throsby obtained more land until by 1860 he farmed 3230 hectares (8000 acres). He built Throsby Park house in 1834 and in 1845 decided to build his own church using plans attributed to the architect John Verge. Bishop William Grant Broughton, Bishop of Australia,

laid the foundation stone in March 1845 and later that year consecrated the church and surrounding land for the graveyard. He named the church Christ Church.

Today Christ Church is an active church having two services each month. It is beautifully decorated and in good order and contains an interesting early organ and a set of painted floral windows which are unique in NSW. In the surrounding graveyard lie many early pioneers including members of the Throsby family and the Osborne family into which they married. Also buried there are veterans of the Battle of Waterloo, Joseph Wild, who was Charles Throsby's herdsman and fellow explorer and Etienne de Mestre, owner and trainer of 'Archer', winner of the first two Melbourne Cups in 1861 and 1862. The Church, churchyard and graveyard are listed on the Commonwealth, State and Local Heritage Registers and the building is classified by the National Trust (NSW).

Moss Vale has grown nearby and where the Church and graveyard once overlooked beautiful rural land it now is surrounded by an electricity sub-station and suburban backyards. The Australian Garden History Society, Southern Highlands Branch have taken an interest in this very historic site and are currently landscaping, hedging and tree planting to screen out the encroaching development and preserve the churchyard area for future generations. Christ Church, Bong Bong is indeed a national treasure.



Sally Darling, author of *Bong Bong and Christ Church, Bong Bong 1800 - 2000*, the story of Bong Bong, the first township in the Southern Highlands, lives with her husband John on a farm near Burrawang. Sally is a warden of Christ Church and is an active member of the Australian Garden History Society, having served on the National Management Committee and Southern Highlands Branch Committee. She is currently compiling the booklet for the Conference in the Southern Highlands in November.



*Boroondara*

## CEMETERY

R E V I S I T E D

by **Ken Duxbury**

Kangaroo grass at Boroondara  
General Cemetery,  
with Bunya Bunya Pine,  
Canary Island Pine and  
Bhutan and Italian cypress  
in background.

---

TRAVELLING DOWN HIGH STREET, Kew in Melbourne, past Boroondara Cemetery, you can glimpse – over and through the brick and iron palisade fence – a fascinating landscape of marble and granite monuments, Italian and Bhutan cypress, Bunya Bunya and Canary Island Pines and scattered indigenous River Red Gums, Blackwoods, Lightwoods and Black Wattles.

This creates high expectations that the cemetery – like so many others in Victoria – must surely contain a treasure trove of remnant indigenous grasses and wildflowers, as well as old and forgotten cultivars of garden plants.

However, when you walk through the narrow side gate – diagonally opposite Childers Street – you are immediately confronted by a bleak and desolate landscape of bare earth, studded here and there with chips of marble, granite and quartz, and fragments of pottery and glass – some of which have been turned deep amethyst by some unearthly forces.

Not a single blade of grass is visible, as far as the eye can see. A sparse scattering of stunted and contorted dandelions cling precariously to life. A few ancient-looking rose bushes, diosmas and rosemary (for remembrance) have miraculously been spared. Clearly the devastation has not been totally indiscriminate.

There is little to relieve the visual harshness and reflected glare of the closely juxtaposed graves and monuments, many of which are tilted, warped or broken into pieces.

A little raven crawling mournfully in the distance, accentuates rather than relieves the desolate atmosphere.

The scene does not, like true garden cemeteries, provide a reassuring reminder of the diversity and continuity of life. It evokes a feeling of cataclysmic disaster and unexplained mass extinction – almost like

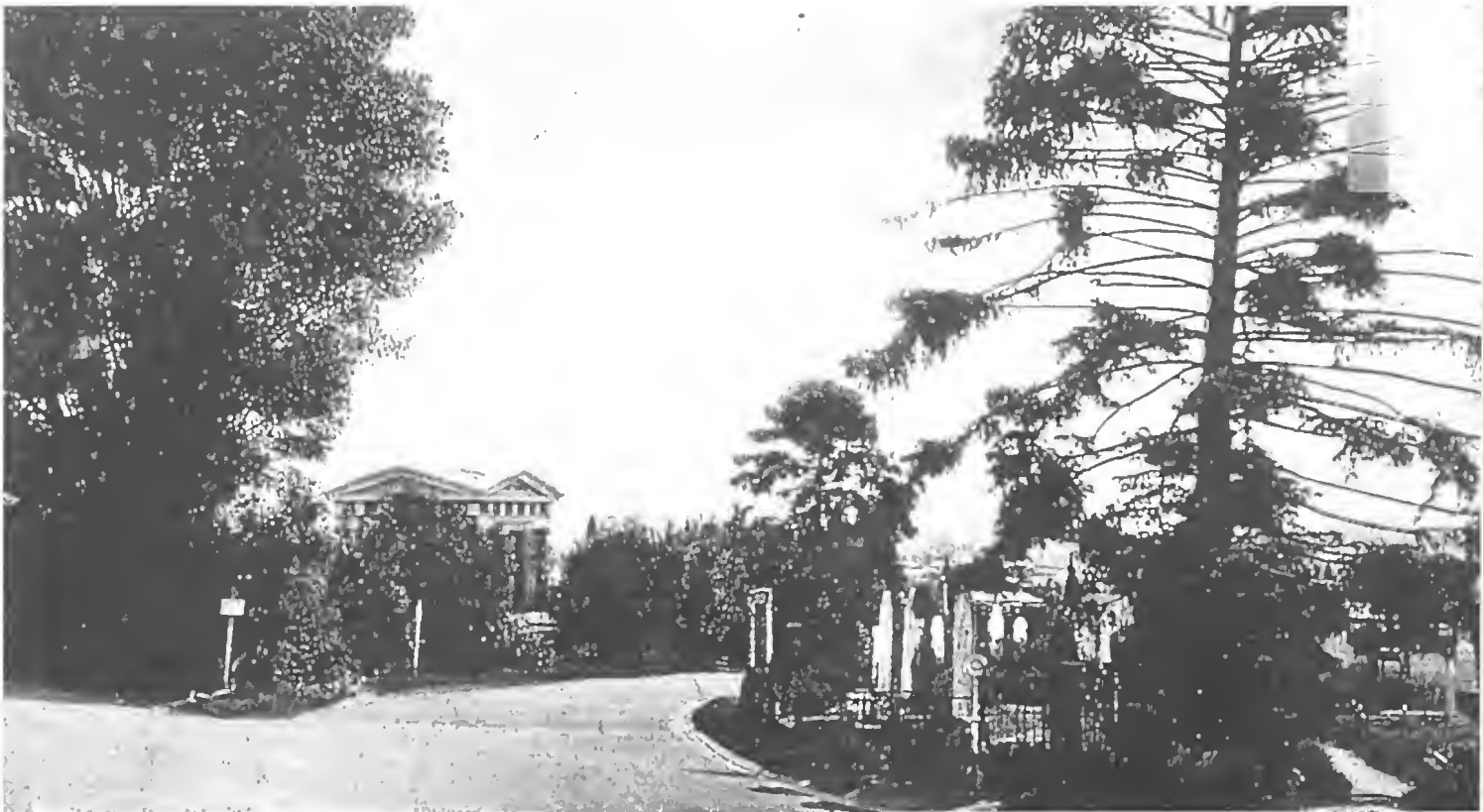
a sneak preview of the aftermath of the Apocalypse.

Only a few years ago, however, the scene was very different, with dense swards of Kangaroo Grass, drifts of dianella – with masses of brilliant blue flowers, and berries – and innumerable butterflies, moths, bees, gnats and other flying and crawling insects.

In 1855, a 12.5 ha triangle of land was reserved for the establishment of Boroondara General Cemetery. The cemetery was located on the outskirts of the city, just beyond the 'rural residential' village of Kew.

below: Cemetery entrance circa 1907, showing highly romantic planting scheme. The clock tower remains a major landmark but is now partly obscured by dense 'native' plantings.

bottom: The picturesque and romantic landscape of Kew Cemetery, with Bunya Bunya pine in foreground.





far right: Romantic and evocative landscape created by juxtaposition of monuments, Bhutan and Italian cypress and gravetop plantings, especially roses.  
April 1987.

*Loudon advocated that cemeteries, once filled, should be closed and later reopened as public walks or gardens...*

Scorched earth landscape resulting from continued herbicide application. Not one blade of grass is visible as far as the eye can see.

The land was well elevated, undulating and typical of the Silurian mudstone terrain of Melbourne's Eastern suburbs.

The site was River Red Gum grassy woodland, with a canopy of River Red Gums, probably some Yellow Box, and perhaps some Manna Gums – understorey species would have included Blackwood, Lightwood, Black Wattle, and possibly Drooping She-Oak, Black She-Oak, Sweet Bursaria and Silver Banksia.

The ground flora would have included Kangaroo Grass, a dominant species, various species of Wallaby, Spear, Poa and other grasses, Dianella and other wildflowers and herbs.

The first burial (of Ellen Quick) took place on March 12, 1859. Early in 1859, the trustees commissioned Frederick Acheson of the Public Lands Department to lay out the grounds. He planned Boroondara as Australia's first romantic garden cemetery. He adopted the main principles of the Victorian-era cemetery landscaping – with curving paths following the contours of the land, exploiting views and creating unfolding vistas.

The design was in accordance with the philosophy of John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843) who, in his article 'Principles of Landscape Gardening as applied to Public Cemeteries' in *The Gardener's Magazine* in 1843 proclaimed that 'churchyards and cemeteries are scenes not only calculated to improve the morals and the taste, and by their botanical riches to cultivate the intellect, but they serve as historical records'.

Loudon advocated that cemeteries, once filled, should be closed and later reopened as public

walks or gardens with all the gravestones and memorials maintained as an integral part of our historical part.

The grounds of the cemetery were laid out in accordance with Acheson's plan in 1861. Three years later, Albert Purchas, an architect, who had previously worked at Melbourne Cemetery, joined the Trust and he is believed to be responsible for the bold and visually effective plantings of Bhutan Cypress, Italian Cypress, Bunya Bunya Pine, Canary Island Pine, Camphor Laurel, Lilly Pilly, Weeping Lilly Pilly and the extremely rare Golden Funeral Cypress.

The cemetery soon became the fashionable last resting place of Melbourne's eastern suburbs elite. Many grand and impressive monuments were erected, including the famous David Syme and Springthorpe memorials. The cemetery was very popular with visitors and a tearoom was established opposite the main gate where postcards were sold.

In the interwar years the trustees began to create more burial space by reducing the widths of paths and roadways. In the 1950s a Columnarium and rose gardens were constructed – responding to the increasing popularity of cremation, and prolonging the active life of the cemetery.

In 1960 it was noted 'The entrances and approaches are kept in excellent condition, but under present labour conditions the Trustees are finding it difficult to keep the whole area in the condition they would like.'

This benign neglect must have encouraged the survival and regeneration of indigenous plants in



the more remote 'back blocks' of the cemetery, and its value as a sanctuary for wildlife.

My own memories of the cemetery go back to about 1964. I still have vivid memories of how, after school, we would explore the cemetery, sometimes climbing in over the high brick fence from Victoria Park, with the assistance of a cypress hedge.

The cemetery was a wonderland of astonishingly varied gravestones, rusty iron railings and wild and overgrown vegetation. As a ten year old I could not distinguish between locally indigenous species and other vegetation. I can just remember there were lots of different types of plants and lots of flowers.

I can also remember the abundance of insects, especially butterflies and a large variety of small moths. One of our major objectives was to catch lizards. Skinks were highly visible and very active. They could be seen sunning themselves on gravestones, until disturbed, when they would seek refuge in cracks and crevices beneath gravestones. Our most exciting quarry were the Marbled Geckos, which could only be found in the cemetery.

I revisited the cemetery in 1987 after studying landscape architecture and becoming interested in native grasses and remnant areas of indigenous vegetation.

The cemetery landscape appeared to be little changed from the mid 1960s, with the exception of the many rows of Italian and Greek graves, neatly tended and usually topped with vases of fresh flowers.

The back areas of the cemetery still had a very overgrown appearance which I found picturesque and wildly spontaneous, but which some visitors might have considered untidy and neglected. The cemetery was a secluded oasis where plants and wildlife – both indigenous and exotic – could be left in peace, undisturbed by regular, deliberate human intervention.

The cemetery contained a remarkable diversity of planted and naturalized garden plants, accidentally introduced weeds, and remnant indigenous species. The planted and naturalised species included roses, rosemary, diosma, rampant ivy, vinca, geraniums, agapanthus, arum lilies, various succulents – including *Agave Americana* and many bulbs, including daffodils, belladonna lilies and bluebells.

From about 1990 there was a major change in the management of the cemetery – from benign neglect to the blanket spraying of large quantities of herbicide – apparently because of a belief that the cemetery was 'overgrown with weeds' and needed to be 'tidied up'.



Initially, a herbicide called Exit was used, but for several years the only herbicide used has been Roundup. This is sprayed from a large wheeled tank, something like a spectral, nightmarishly transmuted Furphy water carrier.

Although the indigenous and exotic vegetation in the cemetery has been greatly depleted by herbicide use, some indigenous vegetation does still survive. Several River Red Gums and saplings still remain although there are no longer any seedlings, and the feeling that the cemetery is being 'reclaimed by the bush' has been totally lost.

There are still quite a few mature Blackwood and Lightwood trees throughout the cemetery, although some trees, especially those which were damaging graves, have recently been removed. There is still some regeneration of both these species by suckering, especially where the soil has been disturbed – for example, where new graves have been dug. However these suckers are being poisoned as they arise, and there are no longer any thickets of suckers. One of the Blackwood trees has several specimens of Grey Mistletoe attached to it.

A small patch of *Dianella revoluta* now remains under the copse of Sugar Gums although none remains on or around graves in the cemetery and *Dianella longifolia* appears to have totally disappeared.

There are no longer many birds in the cemetery, especially when compared to nearby Victoria Park. Small groups of Ravens can often be seen perching on grave-tops and their iron railings, looking very sinister and foreboding. Magpies, when they are occasionally seen, provide a more cheerful note.

Sulphur-crested Cockatoos often visit the Canary Island Pine trees and stand on top of the marble graves beneath the trees, gnawing on fallen pine cones, which they hold in their claws. When disturbed, the Cockatoos take flight, sometimes taking a partially eaten pine

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Ken Duxbury was born in 1953 and has lived in Melbourne almost all his life. He qualified as an urban planner and worked for a firm of planning consultants for several years before studying a Master of Landscape Architecture course at Melbourne University. After graduating in 1986, he worked as an historic gardens consultant for the National Trust developing typologies of historic gardens and adding to the historic gardens inventory originally compiled by Peter Watts, and preparing draft citations for historic gardens awaiting classification. Between 1987 and 1992, Ken worked for the former City of Malvern as a project officer and then travelled around England visiting historic gardens and cemeteries. On his return, Ken worked as environmental planner for the Shire of Diamond Valley, an urban fringe municipality with many rare plants which were threatened by urban development. Ken has made a submission to try and get the Boroondara cemetery included on the Victorian Heritage Register as he is concerned a cemetery of such significance is under threat due to its lack of management planning and heritage protection.



Rampant ivy makes an important contribution to the visual appeal of the cemetery, but also has the potential to damage, as well as obscure, monuments. April 1987.

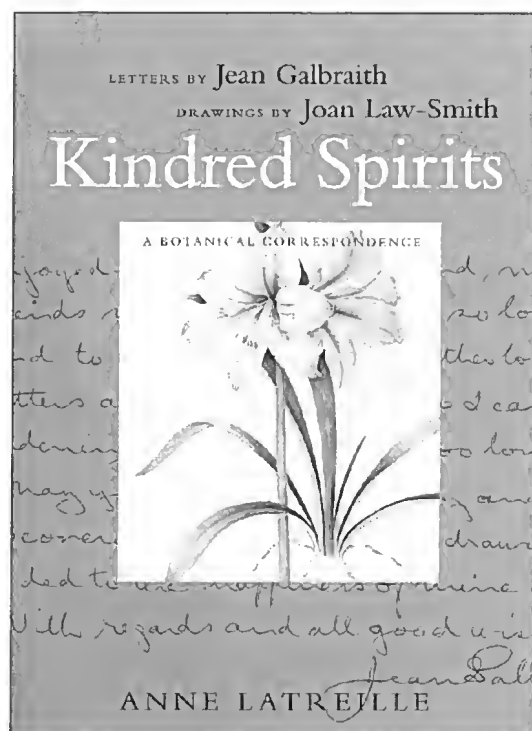
cone away in the beaks. The Cockatoos also feed on the seeds of exotic grasses which grow under the pine trees. They hold the stalks in their 'hands', and with surprising delicacy, pick out the seeds with their beaks. Middens of chewed stalks and gnawed pine cones can usually be found beneath the pine trees. Wattle birds can sometimes be seen in the eucalypts and other trees in the cemetery.

Cunningham's Skinks are still easy to find throughout the cemetery and Marbled Geckos can still be found beneath the built-in flower containers. Some insects can still be found, although not in their former profusion and diversity. The most common are the little black

ants, which form endless, funeral processions along the paths and on top of the gravestones, and disappearing into underground passageways, bearing cargoes of dead insect fragments and other delicacies.

Boroondara cemetery certainly has the potential to provide Kew, and Melbourne, with a unique cultural, recreational and education asset, as well as providing a sanctuary for indigenous plants and wildlife. However there is an urgent need to enhance the environment of the cemetery.

Perhaps we do not just get the politicians, but also the cemeteries, that we deserve.



## KINDRED SPIRITS

*Kindred Spirits* is the story of a botanical correspondence, between the flower painter Joan Law-Smith and the naturalist and writer Jean Galbraith. It has at its core a 'college of one', conducted by correspondence - Jean's letters and botany lessons, Joan's drawings in response. What followed was a meeting of minds far beyond the original lessons, with a wealth of riches in their shared beliefs, attitudes and life experiences.

Writer Anne Latreille's biographical text outlines both women's full and challenging lives before they met, and their considerable achievements since. This is a delightful, personal picture of two talented, original women whose contribution to Australian garden history is immense.

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THE AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY  
Available for \$66 (inclusive of GST and postage free) from the  
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## ALL SAINTS CHURCH PERTH

*ON THIS SPOT CAPTAIN STIRLING camped in 1827 and here the vision of a State arose in his heart and mind. Oldest church building in W.A., 10th January 1841*



This is printed on the information board in the grounds of All Saints Church, Henley Brook in Perth.

The building of Western Australia's oldest church commenced in 1840 and was constructed largely by voluntary contributions of both labour and material from local residents. M.J.Bourke wrote in *On the Swan: A History of the Swan District of Western Australia* (1987) that by 1841 the Swan district had three permanent church buildings, while the capital at Perth still only had a temporary church made of rushes. 'The fact that the Swan was so far ahead of other districts in this respect is mainly attributable to the influence of Irwin, Mackie and Moore, all staunch and fervent Anglicans who had been connected with the Western Australian Missionary Society since its founding'.

Although built on simple rectangular lines, it nevertheless has slight Gothic influences in the form of a bell turret and pointed windows. It was apparently built under the direction of Richard Edwards, a former brickmaker.

by **Carolyn Middlemis**

All Saints Church and graveyard overlook the Swan River in Perth, where Captain Stirling rowed to and camped in March 1827.

Photos by Carolyn Middlemis

Carolyn Middlemis is an active member of the Australian Garden History Society in Western Australia and is helping co-ordinate the collection of data for the National Database from *The West Australian Gardener*. Carolyn has also contributed some entries to the *Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens* and is studying part-time B.A.

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## CHARLTON



*Circa 1880s*

The subject of Sydney Long's River House painting. National Trust listed garden with renovations to house by Professor Leslie Wilkinson. Two acres of romantic rambling gardens created by Sheila Hoskins on the banks of the Mulwaree River on the outskirts of Goulburn.

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top left and right: The original Pulletop Station garden at Mangoplah on the Riverina in southern New South Wales.

above: Mainstay of the Pulletop Station garden today is this massive oak tree in the lower garden. Pulletop Garden in the Riverina dates from 1847. Originally a large garden employing numerous gardeners, the garden is now a remnant of its former glory, having been left to the elements for over a hundred years. The once grand scheme included both exotic and native species.

**Ken Taylor** is a retired farmer and former RAAF pilot living on a farm on the outskirts of Wagga Wagga who by a series of chance happenings came across the Pulletop photos.

## THE PULLETOP story

by **Ken Taylor**

IT ALL BEGAN nearly twelve months ago when my sister called in with an armful of old photographs. She had found them in an old trunk in the garage while sorting through her late father-in-law's belongings.

The scenes depicted were of a station property, concentrating on a magnificent garden. No one could tell us anything about them. So the search began for the garden that was.

We searched the photographs for clues that might pinpoint the property. The country looked familiar so they could have been taken in the Wagga – Holbrook – Mangoplah area. The signature of Thos. E. Taylor on the back of some of the photos aroused our interest, our name being Taylor.

We decided the photographs would have been taken about 1870 – 1890. We showed them to some old district families, but received no recognition or clues. *The Wagga Daily Advertiser* printed some of the garden scenes with a request that anyone who could identify them might phone us – no results.

We then decided to contact Peter Freeman, author of books on old homesteads and woolsheds of the Riverina. He referred us to the archivist at The National University of Canberra – a Mr Michael Saclier. He was able to tell us that in 1985 the Art Gallery of NSW had asked him to identify the location of some photos that had come into their possession. The series of photos were taken on the same property as ours were taken. He was able to tell that the photos had been taken on either Pulletop or Buckaringa Stations, so contacted the present owners of Pulletop to arrange a visit to the old homestead and garden.

On arrival at Pulletop, there it was – outlined by huge trees now 130 to 140 years old, some roses and shrubs. The driveway and remnants of the garden steps could be seen. The homestead had fallen down except for huge stone walls, the kitchen chimneys were still standing and the chapel was now a cottage.

Further research has revealed that Pulletop was an outstation of Borambola, taken up by George Macleay, Commissioner for Lands, who came down the Murrumbidgee River with Sturt in 1829 – 1830. Pulletop and Borambola were sold by Macleay to

John Gordon who had been his manager at Borambola for some years in 1850 – 1852.

In 1854 John Cox and John Keane bought Pulletop. The homestead was built in 1855. John Cox and sisters and brothers-in-law purchased Mangoplah Station in 1862. Cox and Keane divided in 1866. Cox, who owned the Pulletop portion, had 17,000 hectares and sold the property to Edmund Westby in 1868 with 13,000 sheep included in the sale.

Edmund Westby was born in England around 1800. He married Catherin Wright in 1836 and came to Australia in 1840 where they had seven children. After owning a sawmill in Melbourne, he purchased Pulletop and gave two thirds to his eldest son Edmund and one third to his youngest son Alfred who died in 1876.

Both boys had been educated at Eton and Cambridge and ran the properties between trips to England. Edmund Wright's address on his 1906 will was the Oxford and Cambridge Clubs, 71 Pall Mall, London.

Edmund Westby was a barrister in Melbourne until taking Pulletop over. He apparently liked to entertain. We believe the gardens were established when he took over in 1868.

In 1911 Pulletop was purchased by Messrs McMicking, Palmer, Cox and White. It was later owned by Les Edwards from Borambola then his son Henry. In 1964 it changed hands again and in 1993 was purchased by the current owners, the Fairchilds.

Since the identification of the photographs, the Pulletop garden has been visited by a horticulturist and Australian Garden History Society member, Jim Webb, from Wagga Wagga who has identified a number of remnant plantings: Kurrajongs, Pepper trees, fig, plane tree, oak, honey locust, Bunya Bunya, box thorn, privet, crataegus, japonica, cypress and variegated Agaves.



# Big Springs

## AND BEYOND

THE CHANCE TO SEE TWO TRULY HISTORIC GARDENS: the remnants of a once magnificent Pulletop Station garden and Big Springs, an extensive garden surrounded by some of the finest Edwardian architecture in rural Australia, provided the impetus for a weekend winter seminar for the ACT, Monaro and Riverina branch of the Australian Garden History Society.

by Maura O'Connor

The fact that these two gardens, situated in the Wagga Wagga district, are so fascinating for true garden history enthusiasts and never open to the general public attracted great interest.

Big Springs comprises a fascinating complex of station buildings surrounded by an extensive garden picturesquely sited on the edge of a large spring fed dam. An octagonal bathhouse, gazebo, dog kennels, stable block and downpipes show amazing attention to detail and an interesting progression of styles. The property was taken up in 1855 by John Peter of Tubbo and has been in the Wilson family since 1865.

The recent discovery of old photographs of the garden and homestead at Pulletop Station (see story page 18) revealed a garden that dates back to 1847. Now a remnant of its former glory, having been left to survive for more than a hundred years, there was much interest in observing the survivors of a once grand scheme and much interest from participants for the potential of possible restoration and documentation.

The weekend seminar also provided the opportunity to explore other interesting gardens in and around the Wagga Wagga area. Collins Park, the oldest in the city, was developed in 1880 from a reserve set aside in 1858. Modelled on a Victorian design with four diagonal paths meeting at the centre around a monument to a Boer war veteran, the park features some magnificent old trees such as *Pittosporum phillyreoides* and *Arcauria biduillii*. By contrast, the young garden at Burnbank, where careful planting has ensured avenues of vistas in a relatively small area, showed what can be achieved in eight years despite drought and bushfires.



Held in the Commercial Club over the weekend of 15-16 July, the seminar explored gardening issues found in the Riverina area. John Winterbottom's witty, sometimes irreverent, perspective of Wagga Wagga's history provided the framework for the following papers and the garden visits. Named after the 'crows' or Australian ravens endemic to the area, Wagga Wagga was settled as a squatting run by the Best family in the 1830s. The establishment of a blacksmith at Wolunday Lagoon, followed by a hotel and shop, saw the beginning of a village, which began to flourish after the goldrushes.

Salinity is not only a major rural issue in the Riverina but is becoming increasingly evident in the urban environment. Jim Webb's well illustrated presentation not only provided the background and explanation to the problem, the result of a rising water table due to tree removal, but also some practical management techniques. Mulching,

The 'new' house at Big Springs on the Riverina was built in 1887. Delegates to Big Springs were welcomed by Lindsay West, daughter of George and Muffy Wilson.





Big Springs is a fascinating complex of station buildings situated on the edge of a large dam and surrounded by an historic garden.

Visitors to Big Springs during the Wagga Wagga winter seminar weekend organised by the ACT, Monaro and Riverina branch of the Australian Garden History Society were fascinated by the dog kennel complex amongst the interesting array of station buildings which also included an octagonal bathhouse, gazebo, stables and separate stone billiard room.



controlled night waterings, boreholes and monitoring are proving to be manage the problem.

Bob McFarland's energetic, if not passionate association with the Baroola strain of European carp completed the morning's presentations. The carp now represent eighty percent of fish species in the Murray-Darling river system, competing with native fish and eroding river channels through their feeding habits. The harvesting of the fish and a special processing technique has now turned the pest into a highly lucrative fertiliser for the speaker. The fish provides a rich, broad based fertiliser with trace elements and micro-nutrients resulting in high yields, such as 2.6kg carrots! Was it the prospect of the latter that resulted in almost a sellout of the liquid examples during the following lunchbreak?!

The intricacies and complexities of olive growing and its long history in the Wagga Wagga area began the second day's lecture and provided

a refreshing change from the environmental problems of the previous day. From indiscriminate plantings and poor record keeping, several million dollars are now being applied to the industry to establish a botanical register and associated database. Rod Mailer went on to explain the finer points of olive oil, demystifying some of the confusion over the various grades. DNA testing is now being applied to determine those varieties with the highest oil content and potentially the most desirable – extra virgin.

Lucille Strachan completed the programme of lectures with her presentation on the Ornamental Plant Collections Association of Australia, formed in Melbourne in 1988. Its objectives to maintain and increase the diversity of garden plants, document, propagate, exchange information and publish has led to the formation of fifty three collections, seven being located outside Victoria.

Maura O'Connor is a map librarian with a lifetime interest in gardening, the natural environment and social history. She is currently treasurer of the ACT, Monaro and Riverina branch of the Australian Garden History Society.

# criss canning

CRISS CANNING IS ONE of those rare artists who shun contemporary art's theoretical trends.

by Anna Clabburn

Her work, like her personal nature, is boldly independent and full of a rich joy in life and its visual beauty. Formally, her art remains loyal to centuries old traditions of still life painting and yet her imagery consistently offers more than simple records of objective reality.

Never one to paint from a photograph, Canning often places a frond or blossom in one of her myriad collection of vases before committing its beauty to canvas. Capturing the fugitive detail of living species is akin to the botanical artist's difficult task. For Canning, the challenge is enhanced by the fact that she works slowly, taking care to catch every intricate detail and characteristic of her subject. Over the years, her creative rhythm has remained the same, she rises early and paints standing for close to eight hours a day, taking a midday break and perhaps a brief stop for tea. These days she seems to delve even deeper into the space of her pictures, taking herself further into their individual lives. It is not unusual for her to complete just one jewel-like image a month.

In all Canning's work we find a pervasive sense of her own domestic environment. A majority of her imagery is realised in her cosy living room studio, by the winter fireside or in the filtered

light which pours through her large high windows. Her husband, David Glenn, runs an extensive nursery at their property Burnside and shares her passion for nature's creative experiments. He often pursues hybrid species and scouts out rare strains of familiar plants for his own pleasure and his wife's artistic endeavours. Many of the specimens cultivated by Glenn find their way into Canning's paintings. She sets them against her own collection of exotic patterned fabrics, mixing ingredients like a shrewd chef – for visual and sensual effect.

Canning's talent hides a peculiar and captivating quirk of logic...one that is perhaps a clue to the incontrovertible appeal of her paintings. It takes some time to realize that, underlying the exuberant warmth of her domestic arrangements, her images suggest a strange sense of human absence. She paints for nothing less than to cement life's inclination to abstraction.

Criss Canning's next exhibition *Still-life + Interiors* will be held at Philip Bacon Galleries, Fortitude Valley, Brisbane, Queensland and opens on Friday 19 October 2001.



Gum Blossom 76.0 x 71.0 cms

below: Criss Canning



Anna Clabburn is an arts writer based in regional Victoria and Melbourne. She is the Victorian Representative for Artbank, the Federal Government's art rental collection, and currently writes reviews for *The Australian* newspaper.

## the art of BOTANICAL ILLUSTRATION

Over the last ten years the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens have endeavoured to establish in Melbourne a nationally recognised centre for the promotion of an education in the art of botanical illustration, nurturing and developing the skills of a growing number of professional and enthusiastic amateur artists, exhibiting and selling their works.

Exhibitions and classes now flourish throughout Australia but one of the highlights of the biennial exhibition *The Art of Botanical Illustration*, where the works of many of Australia's most talented artists are displayed together at the one venue at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne.



A small initial exhibition in 1992 by local artists has now developed to include the works of artists from throughout the country and is it now recognised nationally as the most significant exhibition of its kind. The exhibition, to be held at Mueller Hall in the National Herbarium of Victoria features original paintings and drawings by over 70 of Australia's leading botanical artists. These original artworks combine finely observed details with artistic expression and celebrates the diversity and natural beauty of Australian native and exotic plants, their fruits and flowers. All works in the exhibition are for sale.

Exhibition open October 26 to November 12, 10 am to 5 pm daily. left: *Agapanthus* by Helen Burrows

## UNITED KINGDOM

In the United Kingdom, the National Gardens Scheme has opened gardens for charity now for over 60 years and few books whet the appetite like the National Gardens Scheme's Yellow Book available on order through most Australian book stores for around \$12.00 or from any newsagent or book store as soon as you land in the United Kingdom. Enquiries: Hatchlands Park, East Clandon, Guildford, Surrey, GU47RT, phone 014-8321-1535, web site: [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk).

## WHERE TO STAY?

Bed and Breakfast For Garden Lovers - send a self-addressed envelope to fit a booklet (11cm x 22cm) with 3 international reply-paid coupons. These coupons are easily available at post offices around the world and intended to cover the cost of postage - to Sue Colquhoun, Coordinator BBGL, Handy Water Farm, Sibford, Gower, Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX155AE. web site: [www.bbgl.co.uk](http://www.bbgl.co.uk).

Membership of the Royal Horticultural Society is the gardeners' guide to inspirational gardens and gardening knowledge throughout the United Kingdom. Membership gives free admission to four wonderful gardens, privileged tickets to the worlds most famous flower shows and a copy of *The Garden Magazine* every month. Membership costs around \$100 but really is worth the trouble if you are planning a gardening tour of the United Kingdom. Enquiries: RHS, Membership Department, P O Box 313, London, SW1P2PE.

The Quiet Garden Trust, in England oversees a network of gardens attached to private houses and churches, which provide occasional days of stillness and reflection for those in search of spiritual refreshment. Email: [quiet.garden@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:quiet.garden@ukonline.co.uk).

**SCOTLAND'S GARDEN SCHEME** is a registered charity founded in 1931. Email: [sgsoffice@aol.com](mailto:sgsoffice@aol.com) or web site: [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk).

## ON THE CONTINENT

Unfortunately only Belgium and the Netherlands have a similar garden touring scheme available for international and local travellers. In Belgium the **JARDINS OUVERTS' OPEN TUINEN** is a non-profit organisation founded in 1990 with most of the proceeds of their open gardens supporting Belgium Charities. With an annual publication: Catalogue of Belgium Open Gardens, published each March, it lists around 200 private gardens. Contact: Christine de Groote, Jardins Ouverts' 1000, Brussels. The Netherlands: De Tuinspiegel is related to the Nederlandse Tuinenstichting (**DUTCH GARDENS FOUNDATION**), founded in 1981 to promote the preservation of valuable parks and gardens throughout Holland. Its annual publication is available from their head office and lists over 200 open gardens. Email: [info@tuinspiegel.com](mailto:info@tuinspiegel.com), web site: [www.tuinspiegel.com](http://www.tuinspiegel.com).

## USA

The Garden Conservancy, founded in 1989 is a national non-profit organisation dedicated to the preservation of America's finest gardens. Entry fees support the preservation of America's exceptional private gardens and facilitate their transition to independent, not-for-profit ownership and operation. Their annual publication: Open Days Directory, lists 400 gardens in 23 states opening in the year 2000. Contact: Antonia Adezio, Executive Director, The Gardens Conservancy, P O Box 219, Coldspring, New York, 10516. Email: [gardencons@aol.com](mailto:gardencons@aol.com), web site: [www.gardenconservancy.org](http://www.gardenconservancy.org).

## AUSTRALIA

**AUSTRALIA'S OPEN GARDEN SCHEME** Email: [national@opengarden.org.au](mailto:national@opengarden.org.au), web site: [www.opengarden.abc.net.au](http://www.opengarden.abc.net.au) with your best weekly guide to this and next weekends Open Gardens available each week through newspaper gardening 'What's On' columns.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

I/we wish to become a member of the Australian Garden History Society and enclose my/our subscription.

Name(s) .....

Address ..... State ..... Postcode .....

Telephone: Home ( ) ..... Business ( ) .....

Email Address .....

Subscription Rates Please tick (GST inclusive)

☐ Individual Member \$47

☐ Household Membership (2 adults and children) \$61

☐ Company/Institution/Library \$73

☐ Youth Rate (25 years and under) \$20

☐ 3 year Individual Member \$132

☐ 3 year Household Membership \$165

☐ 3 year Company/Institution/Library \$198

☐ Donation \* \$

Cheque/Money order enclosed: Please make cheques out to the *Australian Garden History Society*

Please debit my credit card: ☐ Viscard ☐ Mastercard ☐ Bankcard

Card No.                 Expiry date .....

Cardholder's signature .....

The Society is affiliated with the Australian Council of National Trusts and is thereby able to benefit from the Trusts' tax deductible status.

\*Donations are welcome and should be payable to the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) and forwarded to the AGHS.

Membership benefits: subscription to the Society's official journal, *Australian Garden History*, six times a year; garden related seminars, lectures, garden visits and specialist tours; opportunity to attend annual conference and conference tour; contributing to the preservation of historic gardens for prosperity.

AGHS Office, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra, Vic. 3141

Phone (03) 9650 5043 Toll Free 1800 678 446 Fax (03) 9650 8470

THIS FORM CAN BE PHOTOCOPIED SO THAT THE JOURNAL CAN BE RETAINED INTACT

# CALENDAR of EVENTS

## SEPTEMBER

### SUNDAY 17

*VIC Churchhill Island* - Garden Photography workshop with Libby Brown Entry, Workshop, Lunch and Teas \$66 (\$77 non-members); Entry, Lunch and Teas \$20 (\$28 non-members). *Enquiries:* Nina Crone (03) 5663 2381

### SATURDAY 23

*SA Habudorf* - Working bee at The Cedars

### SUNDAY 24

*VIC Kalorama* - Working bee at 'Ridge House' *Enquiries:* (03) 9397 2260

### FRIDAY 29 – MONDAY 2 OCTOBER

*VIC Port Campbell & Otways Ranges National Parks* - Fully catered bus tour led by Rodger & Gwen Elliot. Interstate members welcome. *Enquiries:* Helen Page (03) 9397 2260

## OCTOBER

### SUNDAY 15

*NSW Yass* - Yonder to Yass - a walk around the country town of Yass. Cost \$10 (\$12 non-members) includes afternoon tea.

### SATURDAY 28

*VIC Daylesford* - Working bee at *Wombat Park* *Enquiries:* Helen Page (03) 9397 2260

## NOVEMBER

### THURSDAY 2

*NSW Southern Highlands* - 21st Annual National Conference Registration Time 2 - 5 pm Venue Bowral Memorial Hall, Bendooley Street, Bowral.

### FRIDAY 3 - SUNDAY 5

*NSW Southern Highlands* - 21st Annual National Conference: Richness in Diversity - From Grassland to Rainforest - From Stone Walls to Potagers. Speakers include Dr Judyth McLeod, Dr David Tranter, Ray Nolan, Greg Stone, John Hawkins and eight passionate gardeners: Michelle Scamps, Geoffrey Cousins, Marylyn Abbott, Geoff Duxfield, Robyn Mayo, Nicholas Bray, Jane Lemann and Sarah Cains. The Cockatoo Run Expedition on Saturday is open to members and

non-members - delegates may invite additional guests (prior booking is essential). The heritage 3801 train travels from Wollongong to Bowral - a trip that traverses the diversity of the region. CLOSING DATE FOR REGISTRATION October 3. Tourism Southern Highlands will provide a free accommodation booking service on 1800 656 176. *Enquiries and bookings* Jackie Courmadias (03) 9650 5043.

### MONDAY 6

*NSW Southern Highlands* - Optional Conference Day visiting five landmark gardens including Kennerton Green, Whitley and Buskers End.

### TUESDAY 7 - THURSDAY 9

*NSW Southern Highlands* - Post Conference Tour: Off the Beaten Track. TOUR BOOKED OUT

### SATURDAY 22 – SUNDAY 23

*Vic Melbourne* - Weekend Winter Seminar: The Influence of Immigration on our Gardens. Interstate members welcome. Booking form available. *Enquiries* (03) 9827 8073

### SATURDAY 25

*Vic Birregurra* - Working bee Mooleric *Enquiries* (03) 9397 2260.

## DECEMBER

### MONDAY 4

*Vic Melbourne* - Christmas function - details in next journal.

*ACT Canberra* - Christmas Party

## richness IN DIVERSITY

FROM GRASSLANDS TO RAINFOREST  
FROM STONEWALLS TO POTAGERS

### AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY ANNUAL NATIONAL CONFERENCE

BOWRAL NSW  
NOVEMBER 3 – 5 2000

BOOKINGS AND ENQUIRIES  
Jackie Courmadias (03) 9650 5043

The Annual General Meeting of the Australian Garden History Society will be held in Bowral on Sunday November 5, 2000 at 8.15am. Items to be included on the agenda should be posted to the AGHS office. Branches are asked to nominate their representative onto the National Management Committee and to inform the Secretary, Helen Page, (c/- of AGHS office) by Monday 18 September 2000. As there are no vacancies for elected representatives on the NMC this year, nominations will not be called for. Voting will be required at this AGM on the Notice of Motion presented by Victor Crittenden at the 1999 AGM on the terms of office of branch committee members. An explanation of this Notice of Motion together with arguments for the Motion and against the Motion are enclosed in this issue of Australian Garden History. Also enclosed is a proxy voting form and voting paper. Voting papers must be lodged at the AGHS Office by 31 October.

Proxies close twenty-four hours before the AGM and must be in the hands of the Secretary at that time.

### Dr Elizabeth Ann Kerr 9 Feb 1944 - 8 Aug 2000

Along with many other members of the AGHS, I lost a friend last week when Liz Kerr died in the Geelong Hospital after a short illness.

Many of you will know Liz as a bookseller (Garden Street Books) who set up shop at several of our conferences. Her funeral was attended by her family and many friends who had shared her interests in books, plants, birds and animals, and who spoke and recalled their special times together. Liz is remembered as warm and loving, determined, intrepid and generous, and as one friend said, 'authentic' – what a fabulous way to be remembered.

Liz, a PhD in Botany (her thesis was on Seagrasses in Swan Bay), collected small bulbs. When I saw her in hospital only five days before her death she was giving instructions on exactly where some special bulbs were to be planted. Friends are collecting some of her bulbs, which are growing in the shade provided by her extensive collection of weeping trees, and the Geelong Botanic Gardens are moving many of the trees and bulbs to add to their collection. We believe a new bed in memory of Liz is to be developed.

The AGHS has lost a loyal supporter and good friend.  
by Helen Page



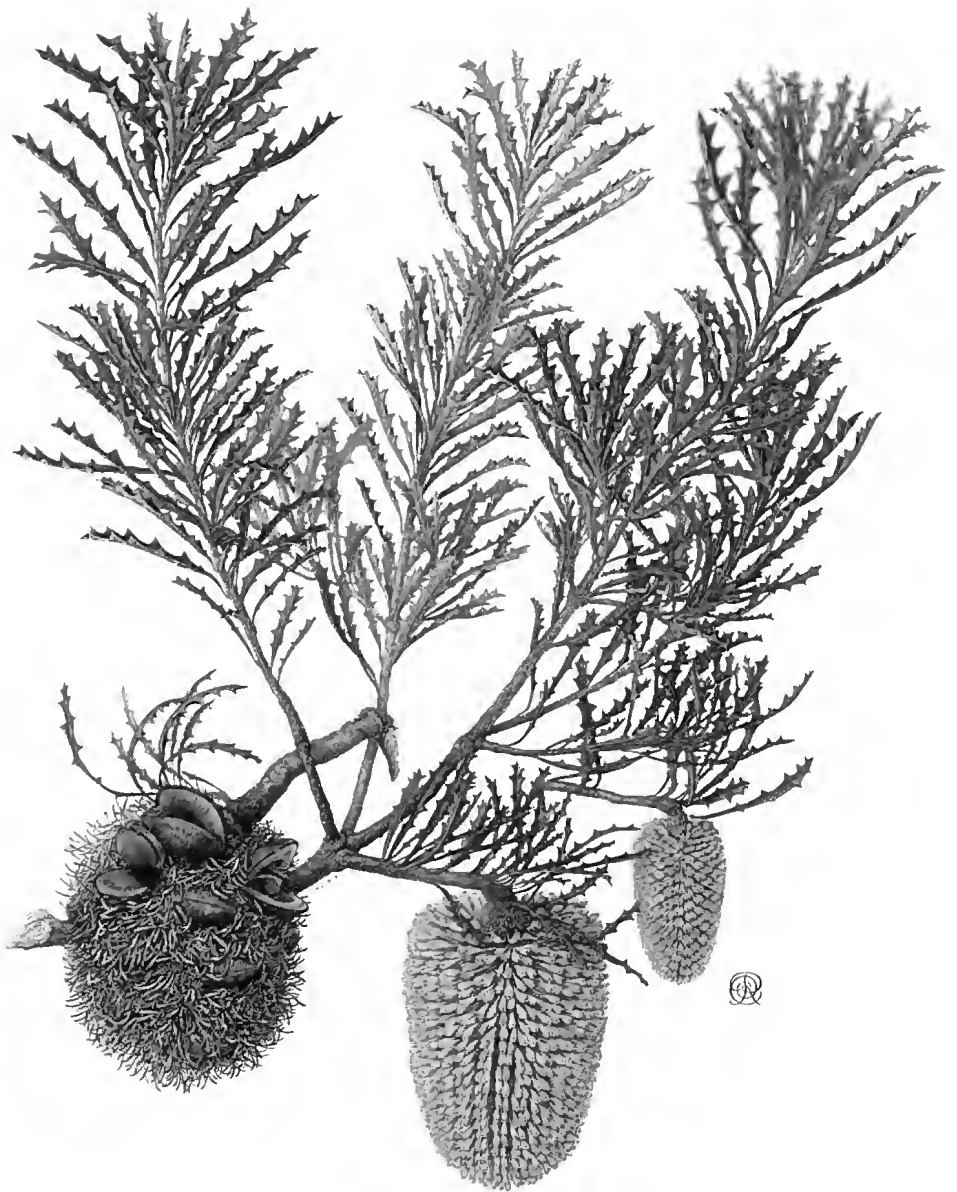
by Nina Crone

*Banksia aculeata* collected 21.10.1990 Darling Range National Park

above: *Banksia aculeata* 1990  
field sketch  
Monash University Collection

right: *Banksia aculeata*  
watercolour

Monash University Collection



For twenty-three years Melbourne botanical artist, Celia Rosser, and Perth botanist, Alex George, successfully overcame a distance of 2700 kilometres to combine their respective talents in Monash University's 'Banksia Project'.

At the opening of an exhibition of the water-colour paintings from the third and final volume of *The Banksias* Professor Carrick Chambers recalled how three banksia paintings had dominated Rosser's first exhibition at the Leveson Street Gallery in 1965 and led to her work for Monash University.

In 1977 the university appointed Alex George botanical adviser to the 'Banksia Project' with responsibility for the text in all volumes. Having a sound knowledge of the location, flowering and fruiting times of banksia species he organised most field trips for Rosser.

During these trips George and Rosser selected aesthetically pleasing specimens to display the major stages of growth, flowering and fruiting. Rosser made colour notes and pencil

drawings for the long and painstaking process of building up the finished watercolour.

After the 'field colour sketch', a detailed drawing using tracing paper was meticulously developed. Often five or six drawings preceded the final one which Rosser photocopied and sent from Melbourne to Perth for scientific approval. Next she would make a lightly coloured 'studio colour rough' and only after this would work on the final painting begin. The entire process for one painting took two to three months. There are 76 plates in the three-volume series.

Celia Rosser's breath-taking output over nearly 35 years has given Monash University a collection that should become as well-known as the Charles Rennie Mackintosh drawings at Glasgow University or the Glass Flowers at Harvard. Her work has been compared favourably with that of Redouté and the Bauer brothers.

For further information on the publication *The Banksias* contact Noleen Glavish of Nokomis Publications - Phone (03) 9486 1756